

# Saints James and Andrew Funeral Instructions and Other Final Matters

*All of us go down to the dust, yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.*



Saints James & Andrew

## How to use this form:

While this document is designed for those making advanced arrangements, it may also be used to plan a service following the death of a loved one. In such an instance, please also include date of birth, date of death, preferred service date, and include a photo for the leaflet cover if so desired.

## Full Name:

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## Introduction

As we are reminded every Ash Wednesday, we are but dust—and to dust we shall return. Death is a reality that we all will one day experience. But while each of us dies in the sure and certain hope of Resurrection, those we leave behind are faced with urgent and difficult decisions. It can make their burden lighter if we make advanced arrangements for our wishes with regard to our funeral and other final matters.

The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we too, shall be raised. The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that *"neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Romans 8:38). Alongside this joy, is our grief and sorrow at being parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. While we rejoice that the one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Savior, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.

How would you want your life and faith to be celebrated? Think, pray, reflect; if you can, discuss it with your loved ones. Our Rector is available to help with this consideration and with any of the personal or theological complexities it may bring up. Once you have expressed your wishes on this form, you are invited to schedule a time to meet with the Rector. A copy of your wishes is kept in a secure file and can be updated at any time.

## Resources to Support Planning

The following resources may be helpful tools and support your planning efforts.

1. *The 1979 Book of Common Prayer* or [bcponline.org](http://bcponline.org)
2. Bible NRSV translation or [biblegateway.org](http://biblegateway.org)
3. SsJA's *Service Samples & Information featuring*: sample leaflets for each burial rite, suggested readings, suggested hymns; etc.
4. *1982 Hymnal* or [www.ritesong.org](http://www.ritesong.org) (features additional Episcopal hymnals)

## The Funeral Service

- Do you plan to use a funeral home? If so, please list their name and contact information.

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- What are your burial preferences (*cremation, casket, green burial, burial alternatives, etc.*)?

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- Where would you like the funeral to take place (*church, chapel, funeral home, graveside, etc.*)?

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- Would you like your body or ashes to be present at the service? Where would you like your remains to be buried or scattered (*cemetery, garden, etc.*)?

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- Are you entitled to military honors? If so, where are your discharge papers located?

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- Would you like there to be a celebration of the Eucharist? If so, do you have a preference on which Eucharistic Prayer is used? Many good and faithful people chose to, and just as many chose not to. Consider your preference, the needs of your loved ones, and hospitality to those who will attend the service.

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- The Rector is the chief celebrant at funerals, unless they are unavailable, or have given their blessing for another cleric to celebrate. With the Rector’s permission, other clergy are welcome to participate, preach, or even lead the service in its entirety if there is a particular reason for that to happen. Are there other clergy you would like to participate in the service? If so, in what manner? Please provide names and contact information.

*Please note it is the Episcopal Church’s practice that former Rectors do not return to preside at liturgies of the parish they once served. If appropriate, and with the permission of the current Rector, a former Rector may attend funerals. This practice is meant to create healthy boundaries when leadership changes.*

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- There are three full funeral rites offered in the Episcopal Church. Please see *Service Samples & Information* to view sample leaflets of these rites. Keeping in mind your own preferences and what will best speak to those likely to gather at your funeral, do you have a preference for which rite we use? If it is your preference to have only a Committal, please indicate which version of the rite you prefer.

1. **Burial Rite I** uses traditional language from the *1979 Book of Common Prayer* (p.469).
2. **Burial Rite II** uses contemporary language from the *1979 Book of Common Prayer* (p.491).
3. **Burial Rite II with EOW** - uses inclusive and expansive language for God as found in *Enriching Our Worship 1 & 2*.

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- Each service has at least one reading from scripture, or as many as four – traditionally, this would have included a reading from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), Psalms, Christian Scriptures (New Testament), and Gospels. If there is to be a Eucharist, one of those readings needs to be from a Gospel. See *Suggested Readings* in *Service Samples & Information* for ideas. Other poems and readings may be used with the permission of the Rector. Please list the readings you would like here.

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- Would you like there to be a homily (short sermon) given? Many good and faithful people chose to, and just as many chose not to. The preacher tends to focus on why we are gathered and affirming our faith. Generally reflecting and remembering the one who has died is left to the family. If you would like a homily, who would you like to offer that homily?

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- Would you like a loved one to remember and reflect on your life (a eulogy)? You can have one, or as many as three people, offer a remembrance. We ask that these remembrances are kept to about five minutes or less each. If you would like a remembrance, who would you like to offer it?

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- Would you like music at your funeral? If so, are there any particular hymns that are important to you that you would like to have used? If you choose music, you can have one hymn, or as many as four. See *Suggested Hymns* in *Service Samples & Information* for ideas, and then please list hymn number, first line of hymn, and specify which hymnal the music may be found in. If you would like musical soloists, please indicate below. If there is a particular piece of music that you would like not in our hymnals, please provide a copy of the sheet music.

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- Are there particular people you would like to ask to participate in your service? If there are, please indicate who, and the role you would like each to take (Pall Bearers, Ushers, Readers - *clergy always read the Gospel*, Lead Prayers of the People, Acolytes or Eucharistic Ministers):

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## Other Final Matters

- **Do you have a living will, and/or a healthcare power of attorney?**  
These documents can make all the difference in getting the care you want, especially if you are unable to speak for yourself.
- **Does your will say what you want it to?**  
Many people fail to make wills, and their property goes to their descendants by operation of law. Other people make wills, and then forget all about them. Years pass, situations change—if you have not looked at your will recently, do so now; if it needs updating, take care of it.
- **Have you signed up for our parish' legacy giving program, the Third Century Society?**  
If the Church is important to you, please consider making it a beneficiary under your will. Such bequests help the Church to thrive and flourish, and are a gift to those who faithfully follow where you have led the way. If you would like to become a member of [The Third Century Society](#) of Saints James and Andrew, please speak to the Rector.
- **Are there any broken relationships, bad feelings, grudges, or hurts that could be healed while there is still plenty of time?**  
There is no better time than now to bury old hatchets, to reconcile with those you are estranged from, to ask forgiveness of those you have harmed, and to reconnect with those you have drifted away from. This is hard spiritual work, but it leads to joy. If it would be helpful, reach out to the Rector to begin a conversation around healing.

## Signature

*The requests and comments I have written above are meant to guide those who are planning my funeral and attending to other matters arising from my death. Nothing contained here is intended to create, amend, or constitute a Will, or to have any other legal effect.*

Signed:

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Date:

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*\*We recommend you keep one copy in your personal records, and another copy to our clergy, which will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the Clergy's Office.*